

CLEAN VERSION OF THE PENDING CLAIMS

1. (Amended) A hockey stick blade comprising:

a lower portion extending from a toe section to a heel section to form a front and a back face of the blade; and

an upper portion having a longitudinal axis and comprising a defined region of reduced longitudinal bending stiffness in a direction generally perpendicular to the faces of the blade when measured relative to regions in the upper portion that border either side of the defined region along the longitudinal axis;

wherein the upper portion is configured to be detachably mated to a hockey stick shaft.

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2. (Amended) A hockey stick comprising:

a shaft and

a blade adapted to being detachably joined to the shaft comprising [a face,];

a lower portion extending from a toe section to a heel section to form a front and a back face of the blade; and

an upper portion having a longitudinal axis generally extending from the heel toward the shaft, the upper portion being comprised of a defined region of reduced longitudinal bending stiffness in a direction generally perpendicular to the faces of the blade when measured relative to regions in the upper portion of the blade that border either side of the defined region along the longitudinal axis.

3. Cancelled.

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16. Cancelled.

17. (New) The hockey stick blade of claim 1, wherein the upper portion further comprises a front side generally facing in the same direction as the front face of the blade and forming a first outer most exterior surface of the blade and a back side generally facing in the same direction as the back face of the blade and forming a second outer most exterior surface of the blade; and

wherein the defined region of reduced longitudinal bending stiffness comprises an outer most exterior concave surface having a continuous curved transition into at least one of the first or second outer most exterior surfaces.

B2 18. (New) The hockey stick blade of claim 17, wherein the defined region of reduced longitudinal bending stiffness comprises an outer most exterior concave surface having a continuous curved transition into the first outer most exterior surface.

19. (New) The hockey stick blade of claim 17, wherein the defined region of reduced longitudinal bending stiffness comprises an outer most exterior concave surface having a continuous curved transition into the second outer most exterior surface.

20. (New) The hockey stick blade of claim 17, wherein the defined region of reduced longitudinal bending stiffness comprises a first outer most exterior concave surface having a continuous curved transition into the first outer most exterior surface and a second outer most

exterior concave region having a continuous curved transition into the second outer most exterior surface.

21. (New) The hockey stick blade of claim 20, wherein the first and second outer most exterior concave surfaces are directly opposed to one another.

22. (New) The hockey stick blade of claim 1, wherein the blade is comprised of one or more inner core elements overlain with one or more layers of continuous fibers disposed in a hardened matrix material.

23. (New) A hockey blade configured to be detachably mated to a hockey shaft comprising:

(a) a lower portion extending from a toe section to a heel section to form a front and a back face of the blade; and

(b) an upper portion having a longitudinal axis extending from the heel section toward a mating section adapted to be detachably mated to a shaft; the upper portion comprising: a front side having a first outer most exterior surface generally facing in the same direction as the front face of the blade; a back side having a second outer most exterior surface generally facing in the same direction as the back face of the blade; and an outer most exterior concave surface having a continuous curved transition into at least one of the first or second outer most exterior surfaces, wherein the concave surface forms a region of reduced width dimension, as measured between the first and second outer most exterior surfaces, relative to bordering regions on either side of the concave surface along the longitudinal axis.

24. (New) A two piece hockey stick comprising:

(a) a shaft, and

(b) a blade configured to be detachably mated to the shaft, said blade comprising:

(i) a lower portion extending from a toe section to a heel section to form a front and a back face of the blade; and

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(ii) an upper portion, having a longitudinal axis generally extending from the heel toward the shaft, comprising: a front side having a first outer most exterior surface generally facing in the same direction as the front face of the blade; a back side having a second outer most exterior surface generally facing in the same direction as the back face of the blade; and an outer most exterior concave surface having a continuous curved transition into at least one of the first or second outer most exterior surfaces, wherein the concave surface forms a region of reduced width dimension, as measured between the first and second outer most exterior surfaces, relative to bordering regions on either side of the concave surface along the longitudinal axis.

25. (New) The hockey stick of claim 24, wherein the outer most exterior concave surface transitions into the first outer most exterior surface.

26. (New) The hockey stick of claim 24, wherein the outer most exterior concave surface transitions into the second outer most exterior surface.

27. (New) The hockey stick of claim 24 further comprising a first outer most exterior concave surface having a continuous curved transition into the first outer most exterior surface and a

second outer most exterior concave surface having a continuous curved transition into the second outer most exterior surface.

28. (New) The hockey stick of claim 27, wherein the first and second outer most exterior concave surfaces are directly opposed to one another.

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29. (New) The hockey stick of claim 27, wherein the first and second outer most exterior concave surfaces have substantially the same curvature and dimensions.

30. (New) The hockey stick of claim 24, wherein the blade is comprised of one or more inner core elements overlain with one or more layers of continuous fibers disposed in a hardened matrix material.
